

CHAPTER II

SIX MONTHS OF TRAINING

THE AVERAGE MAN

THE average American soldier who went to France received six months of training in this country before he sailed. After he landed overseas he had two months of training before entering the battle line. The part of the battle line that he entered was in a quiet sector and here he remained one month before going into an active sector and taking part in hard fighting.

The experiences of thousands of soldiers differ widely from the typical figures just presented, but a careful study of the training data of nearly 1,400,000 men who actually fought in France gives the average results shown above. In summary they are that the average American soldier who fought in France had six months of training here, two months overseas before entering the line, and one month in a quiet sector before going into battle.

THE DIVISIONS

The Infantry soldier was trained in the division, which was our typical combat unit. In the American Army it was composed of about 1,000 officers and 27,000 men. Training and sorting organizations of about 10,000 men, known as depot brigades, were also utilized, but as far as possible, the new recruits were put almost immediately into the divisions which were the organizations in which they would go into action.

Before the signing of the armistice there were trained and sent overseas 42 American divisions. The training of 12 more was well advanced, and there were 4 others that were being organized. The plans on which the Army was acting called for 80 divisions overseas before July, 1919, and 100 divisions by the end of that year.